

THE
CAUSES of the WAR

B E T W E E N

Great-Britain and Spain:

As they appear from the
Papers that passed between both COURTS,
IMPARTIALLY CONSIDERED.

Nulla esse foris arma, nisi sit consilium domi.

L O N D O N :

Printed for R. GRIFFITHS, in the *Strand.*

M. DCC. LXII.

(Price One Shilling.)

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Philippines: The last bastion of the US dollar

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IV. OAKWOOD

(Office Order Form)

TO THE
R E A D E R.

THE Calamities of WAR, are so numerous, so various, and so grievous, that it never ought to be entered upon by any Nation, without the greatest Caution, and the most mature Deliberation. It is in its Nature a solemn Appeal to GOD, and, considered in this Light, it is the highest Impiety to engage therein, but from a full Persuasion that the Cause on which we engage is supported by JUSTICE. For War between Nation and Nation, is the same Thing as the resorting to Courts of Law, for the Decision of Controversies between private Persons, with this Difference only, that in respect to the latter, Judges may be misled or deceived; whereas this can never happen, in regard to the former. It would be easy to shew, that these Principles are laid down by the best Writers on Government, consequently that they are consistent with the Rules of true Policy, and agreeable to the Law of Nations. But to what End, a Display of Learning, or a Parade of

Authorities, in support of what is obvious to every Man's Reason, and consonant to common Sense?

The bare Persuasion of Justice however, in such as have the Power of making War, is not enough. It is requisite they should convince the World in general, that they make War from no other Motive than a Principle of Justice; because this is of great Importance to the Interest and Reputation of a People; for Nations as well as private Men, ought to respect the Sentiments of their Neighbours. But it is still more requisite, that when any Government is obliged to have recourse to Arms, their own Subjects should be convinced, that their Cause is good; since, upon this Conviction, that Unanimity and Firmness depends, which is so essentially necessary to vigorous and successful Measures.

These, which may be considered as general Rules, and which therefore ought to take place under all Governments, have notwithstanding a peculiar Fitness and Grace, when applied to the Conduct of a free and trading People. The Wisdom of our Government therefore appeared very conspicuous, in submitting the Proceedings previous to the present War with Spain, to the free Examination of

To the R E A D E R.

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all who would take the trouble of making the Enquiry. It was a *Condescension*, that manifested they were themselves persuaded, that they had acted as became them ; and that nothing had been done in this important Business, that could not in their Judgment bear the severest Test.

When therefore these State Papers were laid open to every Man's Perusal, it seemed to be left in any Man's Power, who had read them with Caution, and considered them with Attention, to give the Public his Sentiments upon them ; and this Deduction seems the less liable to Exception, if we consider how freely that greatest of all Liberties, the Liberty of the Press, is exercised in this Country. *A Liberty!* that never injured any honest or virtuous Administration. *A Liberty!* that no Ministers will attempt to invade, who mean to leave our other Liberties secure ; and a Liberty, which when it appears consistent with Truth, instrumental to National Harmony, and productive of Public Good, no honest Man will decline exerting, in favour of that Administration, under whose Auspice it is enjoyed.

These

These Thoughts arose, after carefully perusing, weighing, and comparing, the Papers relative to the Transactions between the two Courts, before the unhappy Rupture; and if they have given Birth, to a Vindication of the Measures of Government, in a Matter so important in its Nature, and which must affect us so deeply in its Consequences, it is hoped it will not prejudice them in the Public Opinion, that they come from a private Person. There is no need of Authority, to enforce Arguments. In the common Concerns of Life, the Disinterested are generally allowed to be the best Judges. If therefore the following Pages, can place this Subject in such a Light, as may induce and sustain, Unanimity in the Minds of his Majesty's Subjects, and produce that sincere Attachment to, and that zealous Concern for the Honour of Government, and Success of the British Nation, in the Course of the present War, they will answer the End for which they were intended; tho' a Person of greater Abilities, who had handled this interesting Point, might have answered it much better.

The

The Causes of the War between *Great-Britain and Spain*, as they appear, &c.

THE late Rupture between their Britannic and Catholic Majesties, is so momentous in itself, and from those Events that will necessarily attend it, must be of so great consequence to this Nation ; that there seems to be nothing more reasonable, than that the People of Great-Britain, should receive the fullest Satisfaction, as to the just Foundation of our Quarrel, and the Propriety of the Conduct of the Administration, as well in their Endeavours to avoid coming to Extremities, so long as consistent with the Honour of the Crown and the Nation's Interest, that seemed possible ; as in respect to the Motives upon which, they advised his Majesty, to declare War, when through the Obstinacy of the Spanish Court, there was no longer the least room left, to hope that the Disputes between the two Crowns could be amicably adjusted. His Majesty, for the Information of his Subjects, having

directed the Papers relative to this Matter, to be laid before both Houses of Parliament, and which are since become Public, affords all the requisite Materials, for this Purpose, and the Application of them, so as to set in their true Light the Measures of Government, in the whole of its Proceedings, upon so critical an Occasion, is the Scope and Intention of the following Sheets. The most simple and natural Method of entering upon such an Undertaking, is to state clearly and plainly, the several Matters that are proposed to be discussed.

The first Point then, is to render evident the Justice and Moderation of his Majesty, in using his utmost Endeavours, to avoid entering into a War with Spain, so long as these Endeavours were consistent with the Honour of his Crown.

The next is, to point out with equal Perspicuity, the Causes which at length induced his Majesty, to alter this Conduct, and to enter upon a War with Spain, when that Measure appeared to him equally just and necessary.

The Consideration, of that Conduct which even after Disagreements have happened, civilized Nations are accustomed to hold one towards another; and the Desire, if possible, of declining that Jealousy, which the Success of the British Arms, in the Course of the present Dispute with France, might have excited; the Hopes of manifesting to all the World, their extreme Unwillingness to extend the Flames of War, and to increase those Disturbances, by

by which Europe has been but too much embarrassed already ; wisely induced Government to act with Tenderness and Circumspection in this Conjunction, that the Respect to Justice, and Unwillingness to have recourse to Arms, without a palpable Necessity, might be universally known, as well as rendered incontestibly apparent.

Besides these general Reasons, his Majesty was under some particular Restrictions, from the Assurances that had been given to his Catholic Majesty's Ambassador here, and in consequence of his own Royal Instructions, by his Minister to the Court of Madrid, even after some Acrimony had been shewn in the Course of the Dispute, that his Majesty would still continue to act, with that Equity and Moderation, which had been preserved from the Beginning of these Altercations ; and would not think himself at liberty to depart from those Professions of Amity and Friendship, which with great Sincerity had been expressed, in the Course of the Negotiation, for terminating the Differences that had long subsisted between the two Crowns, and which in their own Nature, were very far from being irreconcileable.

The reciprocal Interests of both Crowns, or rather of both Nations, making the Continuance of Peace essentially requisite for their mutual Advantage in Commerce, was a very powerful Motive, to sway the King's Inclination to avoid a War, as long as it was practicable. At the Beginning of

the last Century, we lived in constant Peace with the Spaniards, for above fifty Years ; and, during that Space, were in full Possession of the Trade of the whole Spanish Dominions, without any Rival. When Cromwell made War upon that Nation, the Merchants remonstrated against it, and set the vast Profits arising from that Commerce, in a very strong Point of Light. It was in consequence of that War, and the Interruption of our Correspondence with them, that the Dutch came to supply them with Commodities and Manufactures, and have ever since been Sharers in that lucrative Trade ; in which, but for that War, they never could have interfered with us.

All Methods were tried under the Reign of Charles the Second, to recover the Spanish Commerce, and not without Effect. Yet this was done but to a certain Degree, as may be collected from the Difference of the Coinage in that, and the two preceding Reigns. A just Sense of the Benefits arising from hence, induced the Administration, during the whole Reign of King William, not only to cultivate a close Friendship with that Crown, but to be at a very great Expence, in maintaining large Fleets in the Mediterranean, for the Protection of the Spanish Coasts, against the French. The same Conduct, was pursued with the same Views, in the succeeding Reign, and was one principal Cause of our entering so warmly into, and persisting so long, in supporting the late Emperor's Claim

to

to the Crown of Spain, and the Indies ; in which, if he had succeeded, it is presumed our Commerce would have been secured.

But this War, on account of the Spanish Succession, terminating in Favour of a Prince of the House of Bourbon, we had the Mortification of seeing the French let into, and running away with a great Part of the Spanish Trade, contrary to the natural Interest of that Nation ; from whom we take many more of their native Commodities than the French, and, of consequence, the Balance in Silver, is less in proportion in our Favour. The Decline of this Trade, in respect to the British Nation, has been increased by every succeeding Difference between us and Spain, and must be always so, not only during the actual Prosecution of any War between the two Crowns, but from the French entering, during every such Interruption of our Correspondence, into new Branches of their Commerce, continues also to affect us very sensibly, even after the Return of Peace, as we know but with too much Certainty, from repeated Experience. Yet after all this, the Spanish Commerce is still very well worth preserving ; and therefore, a just Regard to the Interests of his Majesty's Subjects. Which ought ever to be an important Object to Ministers, more especially, when already engaged in an expensive War, was sufficient to make Administration very desirous of composing the Disputes between the two Crowns, in an amicable manner.

These

These Disputes consisted only of three Articles, two of an ancient, and one of a recent Date.

The first of these ancient Articles, and indeed the most important, was that of our Right to cutting of Logwood. This Dispute is of about One Hundred Years standing, and yet was never thoroughly settled ; so that certainly this, if any Thing could be so, was a fit Subject for Negociation.

We claim a Right in this respect, from the American Treaty between the two Crowns, of Great-Britain and Spain in 1670, and from the Treaty of Utrecht ; both which declare, that we shall enjoy such Privileges, as we had been indulged in before, as Matters of Right for the future. Now, as it is a Matter of Fact, out of all Dispute, that we had been long before either of these Treaties, in the Occupation of the Places, where our Subjects cut Logwood, as the Spaniards understood it, by their Indulgence ; this was converted into a Right, by the former of these Treaties, and that Right explicitly confirmed to us as such by the latter.

However a Doubt might be moved, whether we can claim, under this Concession, any territorial Jurisdiction, in the Places, where Logwood has been usually cut.

But, on the other hand, perhaps the Forts and other Establishments, raised by our Subjects for their own Conveniency and Security, may be construed to imply such a Jurisdiction.

These

These Establishments, it was equally necessary and natural for us to preserve, till the Spaniards should condescend to give us a competent Security for the Continuance of the Trade, a Point of equal Importance to our Navigation, and to our Manufactures.

The real Difficulty lay, in the adjusting this Security, so that the Jealousies and Apprehensions of the Spaniards might be removed, without Prejudice to the Right, which the Subjects of Great-Britain had acquired, by the two Treaties before-mentioned, to the cutting Logwood. It was indeed a great Misfortune to both Nations, that for this Purpose no unexceptionable Expedient could be found.

But it may be asserted, and from the Papers produced it will appear, that this Negotiation was not altogether ineffectual, since almost at the very Time the War broke out, both Parties were approached nearer to this desired Settlement, than at any Period during the Continuance of this long Dispute.

This Circumstance is the rather mentioned, to shew that the Progress of the Negotiation, with regard to this first Point, could by no means lead to a Rupture between the two Crowns, because in respect thereto, there had scarce appeared less Cause for a War during the Space of the last Forty Years.

We come now to the second ancient Difference between the two Crowns ; and as the former regarded

garded our Right to cutting Logwood, so this arose from the Claim made by Spain to the Fishery.

This Claim is thus stated in the Close of the Fifteenth Article of the Treaty at Utrecht : " And " whereas it is insisted, on the Part of Spain, that " certain Rights of Fishing, at the Island of Newfoundland, belong to the Guipuscoans, or other " Subjects of the Catholic King, her Britannic Ma- " jesty consents and agrees, that all such Privileges " as the Guipuscoans, and other People of Spain, " are able to make claim to by Right, shall be al- " lowed and preserved to them."

This proves plainly, that Spain now might, and at any other time may, urge this as a Claim ; tho' we may have just Reasons, never to admit it as a Right. There was therefore an Impropriety, in our Minister, to stile it as he did, an *inadmissible Claim*, since, as we have seen, it had been already admitted as such, in a solemn Treaty of Peace.

This Expression of an inadmissible Claim, seems to have very much disgusted the Court of Spain, tho' there is good reason to believe, that she never really expected to be admitted to the Enjoyment of that Right, which was thus claimed, or seriously resolved to commence Hostilities against us, if the Right as well as the Claim, was not admitted.

France, as long as she hopes to preserve any Share in this Fishery, will prevent Spain (farther than keeping up the Claim) from urging her Pretensions.

But

But if France should be totally excluded, then and then only, we may apprehend the Spaniards will become serious upon this Topic ; and therefore, perhaps it had been better to leave the Claim on the Foot it stood, than to have perplexed Things still farther, by entering into the Discussion of the Right.

The third, which is the recent Article, respected Offences against the Neutrality of Spain, during the Continuance of the present War.

At first this was very loudly urged, but it appears that these Complaints by degrees subsided ; and therefore, tho' some Points relative to them, might have been a Subject proper to be discussed by Commissaries, yet it cannot be supposed, that either Nation meant to break, or intended to enter into a War upon this Head.

Upon the whole, if War was to have been made, taking Things on the Foot they then stood, it was natural to expect, that it should have been declared by Spain, and not by Great-Britain ; since it was Spain that made these Complaints, whereas Great-Britain made none at all, being in actual Possession of every Point that she contended for.

It is a Point, in which all Political Writers agree, that Claims however absurd, or Complaints however frivolous or unfounded, are no just Causes of War, unless such Pretensions are urged in a hostile manner, or till an Intention manifestly appears, of urging them in such a manner. If they are trivial,

unjust, or urged in an improper manner, the Court to whom they are thus urged, ought to reject them, with a proper degree of Resentment.

It is acknowledged, that this came to be the Case between our Court and that of Spain, in consequence of the Memorial presented by Mr. Buffy, in the Course of his Negociation, relative to the Claims before-mentioned.

There is nothing more evident, than that recurring to the Canal of an Enemy, to convey her Pretensions, more especially, when Spain had an Ambassador resident here, was exceedingly improper; a visible Proof of Unkindness, but not such a Characteristic of Enmity, as could justify in the Opinion of neutral Nations, and according to the received Usages in such Cases, an immediate declaring War.

It was a flagrant Error in Form, and as such it ought to be rejected, and rejected in a proper manner. Accordingly it was rejected, and a proper Resentment expressed.

This offensive Memorial was returned as inadmissible, and a Declaration at the same time made both to France and to Spain, that the Court of Great-Britain would never listen to any of these Claims, if urged in such a manner.

This Step thus taken, with proper Spirit, there was no need of any farther Mark of Resentment, if Spain gave no new Occasion for it; which she was so far from doing, at that Time, that on the contrary,

trary, she made a very full Apology for what she had already done, in a Paper delivered to the Earl of Bristol by General Wall, at St. Ildefonso, August 28th, 1761. For, in that Paper, " His Catholic Majesty affirms to the Court of Great-Britain, " and to the whole World, That his Intention in " consenting thereto, as well as in approving of it, " was not to offend the Dignity of that Crown " (the Crown of Great-Britain), or to retard its " Peace ; on the contrary, to consolidate it, and in " all human Probability to perpetuate it.—It may " have been productive of contrary Effects ; for as " most Actions bear different Constructions, this, " has not received in London, the same that was " put upon it at Madrid and Paris ; and both " Courts have been concerned at displeasing the " King of Great-Britain, and indisposing him " from continuing the Negotiations of Peace with " France, and of regulating his Differences with " Spain, jointly or separately, it is equal to both " Monarchs, since they have only Good in View."

In reference to our Complaint, that Spain had chosen the Canal of an Enemy, it is in the same Paper asserted, that " Spain only consented, France " should take this Step, inasmuch as it appeared " not only inoffensive, but on the contrary, to come " more from an honest and sincere Friend, than " an Enemy ; and that Spain is far from thinking " to irritate England."

With respect to the Indignation we expressed, at the appearance of threatening in Mr. Buffys Memorial, the same Apology tells us, "The Catholic King approves of and esteems in other Monarchs, those Sentiments of Honour he feels himself; and if he had thought, that the Delivery of the Memorial, had been construed as an Intimation, and a Threat, he would never have consented to it."

As a Proof, that Spain at this Time did not mean to break off the Negotiation, notwithstanding Mr. de Buffys Memorial had been rejected as inadmissible, and resented as injurious, as well as improper; we find in this Apology, an express Desire to renew the Negotiation; for therein it is said, "That as the King of Great-Britain, notwithstanding the Delivery of the said Memorial, was inclined to satisfy the Catholic King, and was ready to terminate in a friendly manner, whatever might occasion a Coolness, between the two Kingdoms; His Catholic Majesty, esteems and corresponds most assuredly, with such good Purposes."

It is in this Apology also, that we find what it was, which had so much disgusted the Court of Spain, and which perhaps induced her to consent to Mr. de Buffys presenting that Memorial. Let us therefore once more hear the Apology, "concerning the Liberty of the Biscayners and Gipuscoans, to fish for Baccalao; an absolute Negative is given to that Right, tho' it is so well proved.

" proved. And with respect to evacuating the
 " Establishments, it is only offered upon Terms
 " inadmissible, with the Catholic King's Decorum;
 " that before doing it, He should assure to the
 " English the Logwood. Hard Proceeding cer-
 " tainly ! For one to confess, that he is gone into
 " the House of another, to take away his Jewels,
 " and to say, I will go out again; but first you
 " shall engage to give me, what I went to take.—
 " And still harder, when set in Opposition with
 " the Baccallao. For the Spaniards want that for
 " their Food, as the English want the Logwood,
 " for their Fabrics. Yet the English would by
 " Force take away the Logwood, and hinder by
 " Force, the Spaniards from taking away the Bac-
 " callao.—One would think that the English
 " themselves, ought with Reluctance, to produce
 " such a Pretension."

Thus this Apology, which sets out with decla-
 ring, "That his Catholic Majesty's Intention in con-
 " fenting to, and approving the Memorial presented
 " by Mr. de Buffy, was not to offend the Dignity
 " of the Crown of Great-Britain;" labours to give
 the best Colour, that could be given to the Design
 of that Memorial; disavows any Purpose of threat-
 ning; applauds his Britannic Majesty's Disposition,
 to terminate in a friendly manner, whatever might
 occasion a Coolness between the two Kingdoms,
 and promises to correspond with that friendly Dis-
 position; and, as a Proof of this, suggests what
 had

had given the Court of Spain so much Disgust. Surely this did not give any certain Proof at that Time of hostile Intentions !

It has however been objected, that it is implied in the Memorial presented by Mr. de Buffy, that Spain meant to take a Part in this War; and if this had been so, it would amount to a manifest Proof, that Spain had hostile Intentions even at this very Juncture.

But if we look ever so closely into this Memorial, we shall not be able to find any Thing therein of this Nature, either expressed or implied. That Memorial does indeed say, that France will take a Part in any new War, which Spain may be engaged in, on account of our Disputes with her. But there is not the least Insinuation, that Spain intended, or that France expected, that for this or any other Reason, Spain should take Part with her in this War.

In order to fix this Point effectually, and not to leave the least Shadow of Doubt, it will be proper to produce the very Words of that Memorial. Mr. de Buffy in laying down the Motives, such as they were, for interposing in respect to the Disputes with Spain, delivers himself thus : " Le Roi ne cachera " pas à sa Majesté Britannique que les differends " de l'Espagne avec l'Angleterre l'alarment & lui " font craindre, s'ils n'étoient pas ajustés, une *nou- velle guerre en Europe & en Amérique.*" That is, The King will not conceal from his Britannic Majesty,

Majesty, that the Differences between Spain and England alarm him, and induce him to apprehend, if they are not adjusted, a *new War* in Europe and in America.

After stating the three Points in Difference between Great-Britain and Spain, the Memorial proceeds thus : " Ces trois Articles peuvent être facilement arrangés selon la justice des deux Souverains, & le Roi desire vivement que l'on puisse trouver des tempéramens qui contentent sur ces deux points les Nations Espagnole & Angloise ; mais il ne peut pas dissimuler à l'Angleterre le Danger qu'il envisage, & qu'il sera forcé de partager, si ces objets qui paroissent affecter sensiblement sa Majesté Catholique, determinoient la guerre." — That is, These three Articles might be very easily settled, through the Disposition to Justice in the two Sovereigns, and the King most earnestly desires, that some Expedients may be found, which upon these two Points, (the Fishery and the Logwood-cutting) may be equally satisfactory to the Spanish and English Nations; but he cannot dissemble to England, the Danger which he foresees, and which he shall be obliged to share, if these Objects which appear sensibly to affect his Catholic Majesty, should terminate in a War.

The Intention of this Memorial, at least the professed Intention, is " Relativement à la solidité de la Paix," *i. e.* relative to the Solidity of the Peace ; that is, the Peace then treating between the

Crowns

Crowns of Great-Britain and France. The Object proposed by the Memorial, is, that these Differences between Great-Britain and Spain being once settled, his Catholic Majesty " sera invité à garantir le " Traité, qui doit reconcilier (Dieu veuillé à jamais) " le Roi & le Roi d'Angleterre ; " *i. e.* shall be invited to guaranty the Treaty, which shall reconcile (God grant for ever) the (French) King, and the King of England. If we consider this, and that the *nouvelle guerre*, the *new War* mentioned in the first Paragraph we have cited, is that of which the French King is afraid of being brought to take a Share, as mentioned in the second Paragraph ; there can be nothing clearer, than that in this Memorial no Suggestion is made of Spain's taking a Part in the present War, but quite the contrary ; that France, if these Differences were not adjusted, was apprehensive, even if the Negociation then carrying on had put an End to this, of being drawn into a new War.

What is thus, beyond all Contradiction, evident from the Scope of this Memorial, was farther confirmed by the Declarations made by Spain, in her Apology to England ; that her Disputes should not prevent a Peace between us and France, and by her making also the same Declaration to France, and by the following Passage, in Lord Bristol's Letter of the 6th of December, " His Excellency General " Wall solemnly protested to me, that the Catholic " King, upon finding how unacceptable that Pro-
" posal

“ posal was to England, had sent peremptory Orders to the Marquis Grimaldi, not to let the Tensions of this Court, in the least to interfere with the Progress of Mr. Stanley, and Monsieur de Buffys Negotiations ; and therefore to drop any further Mention of them, lest they might be reputed an Impediment to the Conclusion of a Peace between England and France, which was the strongest Proof his Catholic Majesty could give, of his sincere Intentions in wishing to have the Disputes of Spain, amicably adjusted with Great-Britain.”

Another Objection that may be made, is, that in the Memorial of Mr. de Buffys before-mentioned, it is intimated, that Spain had entered into Engagements with France, and it was every where reported, that these Engagements were contracted by a Pact de Famille, containing Terms very offensive to Great-Britain.

In the first Place, tho' this might administer just Cause of Suspicion, and excite a reasonable Jealousy of the Conduct of Spain, yet that Intimation and those Rumours, were, according to the Usages established amongst European Nations, no sufficient Causes for an immediate War.

The Intimation and the Reports, might so far have a Foundation in Truth, as the Conclusion of such a Family Convention between the two Crowns, and might at the same time be destitute of any Proofs whatever, that such a Family Convention

contained in it, Articles offensive to Great-Britain.

For a Pact de Famille, was no new Thing ; there had been such Family Conventions before, in which there were no offensive Articles, so that nothing could be justly presumed from the simple Conclusion of such a Convention ; more especially, as it had been usual, to revive such Family Compacts at the Entrance of a new Reign ; and, in respect to this, it had been very positively affirmed, that it was no more than the renewing of an ancient Pact de Famille, which would have rendered it a Transaction of no great Importance.

In the next Place, supposing it to be otherwise, and that there were new and offensive Clauses in this Pact de Famille, we had no distinct Accounts of them ; nothing that had the Colour or Appearance of Proofs, to justify any Declaration whatever.

Besides, we know very well, that these Reports were given out, countenanced, and supported by France ; and we likewise know, that they were directly repugnant, to the Declarations made to us by the Court of Spain, at this very Juncture.

We were likewise sensible, that such kind of Reports were political Engines of no new Invention ; but which had been very often, and indeed very recently, practised.

An Example occurred in this very Year. A Report had been very confidently spread, and attributed

buted to the King of Prussia, in relation to a Treaty supposed to be concluded between that Monarch and the Sublime Porte. This was published in every Foreign Gazette, and it was suggested, that there were Articles, in this supposed Treaty, offensive to the Court of Vienna.

Whatever this Treaty might be, and whether it contained or did not contain any such offensive Articles, certain it is that the Court of Vienna, never suspected of having too little Regard for its own Dignity, did not think fit to make the Ottoman Porte its avowed Enemy, by insisting upon a positive Explanation, whether there was any such Articles as had been supposed in this Treaty.

This is not barely an Instance of the like Nature ; but Experience has likewise shewn, that the Court of Vienna acted very wisely, and in the Event has profited by pursuing this moderate Conduct.

We had another Instance, of the same Kind of Artifice practised by the French Court, at the very Commencement of the present War.

It may be remembered how loudly at that Time the Partizans of France every where gave out, that Spain had made a Pact de Famille with her ; that it contained Articles offensive to Great-Britain ; that she was determined to take a Part in the War ; and that she was actually making considerable Preparations for that Purpose.

What was the Conduct, held by the British Ministry, at this Time? Did they immediately declare War, against Spain? No: They directed a Demand to be made, of a Copy of the supposed Treaty, and a Declaration as to the Intentions of the Spanish Court.

It never afterwards appeared, that any such Treaty had then been actually concluded, and the Report of it, tho' for the Purposes and by the Persons before-mentioned, very confidently asserted, and supported by a Variety of Circumstances, was certainly destitute of all Foundation. Was this a Precedent to be flighted in the present Case?

But this was not all, It was supposed, that France had indeed then proposed a Family Compact to Spain, but such a one, that if it had taken Effect, nothing contained in it, could have justified England's making Spain her avowed Enemy, by a Declaration of War.

The Treaty then in Question, is said to have contained only a single Article of a general Guaranty, without any of those offensive Articles that now appear, but of which at this Period we had no Evidence, were contained in the present Treaty.

A third Objection is, that the Report of a Pact de Famille, and of Articles offensive therein to the Crown of Great-Britain, was supported by the Preparations that Spain was then said to be actually making; which were sufficient Proofs of her Intention, and ought so to be considered.

But

But when our Ambassador, his Excellency the Earl of Bristol, demanded an Account of these Preparations, and of their Destination, he received as appears by his Dispatch of the 31st of August 1761, Answers equally clear and explicit, as to both Points. They were these :

“ At my first Conference, I told General Wall I
 “ had received the King’s Commands to desire his
 “ Excellency would, in the present Conjuncture,
 “ give me a proper Explanation with regard to the
 “ Naval Armaments which had been carried on in
 “ the various Ports of this Country ; and to ask for
 “ an explicit Eclaircissement, with relation to the
 “ Destination of the Spanish Fleet ; as well as to
 “ inform myself particularly, from his Excellency,
 “ what were the Dispositions of the Catholic King,
 “ to maintain Friendship, and to cultivate a good
 “ Correspondence with his Majesty ; alledging,
 “ that this Measure was judged by England to be
 “ the more absolutely necessary at present; as the
 “ French Emissaries, and the Partizans of our En-
 “ mies, were attempting, by every Method, to pro-
 “ pagate the Belief of an approaching Rupture
 “ with Spain, in conjunction with France ; there-
 “ fore the King thought himself strongly called
 “ upon, from the indispensable Motives of what his
 “ Majesty owes to his Crown, and to his People,
 “ to expect to have a categorical Answer to the
 “ Questions I had put, by his Royal Command.
 “ The last Time I saw Monsieur Wall, which was
 “ the

“ the fifth Meeting we had together, I renewed
“ those Questions, and then received exactly the
“ same Answer which had been given me the first
“ Time; that Spain was surprised Great-Britain
“ should take Umbrage at any Naval Preparations
“ she was, or had been making, since the Accef-
“ sion of his present Catholic Majesty; for, includ-
“ ing both the Ships of the Line, as well as the
“ Frigates, the whole Number did not exceed in
“ all that of Twenty; which Monsieur Wall af-
“ fured me were, by several, fewer than those
“ which had been equipped during the Reign of
“ the late King Ferdinand. His Excellency told
“ me, that with regard to their Destination, some
“ were frequently going backwards and forwards
“ between this Kingdom and Naples; others were
“ intended to convoy the Homeward, or Outward-
“ bound Flotas, Asslogues, or Register Ships; and
“ the remaining Ones were to serve as a Check upon
“ the Barbary Corsairs, and to defend their Coasts,
“ or smaller Vessels, from Insults; and, in relation
“ to the third Question, his Catholic Majesty’s
“ Disposition and Professions had invariably been
“ the same, and were ever meant to cement and
“ cultivate the Friendship so happily subsisting be-
“ tween our two Courts.”

It was in this State of Things, that the Right Honourable Mr. William Pitt, then his Majesty’s Secretary of State, thought fit to resign the Seals of his Office, because the rest of his Majesty’s Ser-
vants

vants could not concur in Conscience, with the Lord Privy Seal and himself, in advising the King to come to an immediate Rupture with Spain. The Consideration of the Law of Nations, the Apprehension of alarming all Europe by such a Procedure, the shewing so hasty and violent a Spirit, and making so extraordinary a Precedent, of declaring War so abruptly in the Midst of a Negotiation of which there seemed to be no just Reason to despair, would have influenced in a Case like this, with regard to any Power ; but there were Circumstances, that peculiarly strengthened all these Considerations, in respect to Spain.

Such a Declaration, seemed to be wantonly adding to those immense Expences, which were already sensibly felt, in carrying on a War so extensive as ours with France was become ; it was a Measure which by distressing their Commercial Interests, would alienate the Inclinations as well as excite the Clamours, of all Neutral Powers ; it was highly detrimental to the Trade of his Majesty's Subjects, and very discouraging to our Manufactures of every kind ; and in this respect it was particularly distressful, as cutting off the Supplies, which this Commerce constantly and regularly brought in, and which were of so great and so apparent Consequence, to the whole Compass of our Commercial Circulation, a Point indispensably necessary to the Support of Public Credit.

But, besides these general Motives, so glaringly obvious in themselves, and so exceedingly weighty in their Nature, the Injustice of such a Measure, as Great Britain's declaring War at this Period against Spain, would have been exceedingly heightened, by the evident Inconsistency in our own Measures, and their absolute Incompatibility with those Dispositions, which Mr. Pitt himself had directed his Excellency the Earl of Bristol, to represent to the Crown of Spain, as the settled and invariable Principles of his Majesty's Conduct, with respect to that Court, and this but a Month before.

“ It is the King's Pleasure, says that Minister, in
 “ his Dispatch to the Earl of Bristol, of July 28th,
 “ that your Excellency should immediately com-
 “ municate to Monsieur Wall the above-mentioned
 “ Memorial, together with my Letter to Monsieur
 “ de Bussy, returning the same; and in case the
 “ Spanish Minister shall avow that this strange
 “ Piece has really been authorised by the Court of
 “ Madrid, your Excellency will remonstrate, with
 “ Energy and Firmness, the unexampled Irregu-
 “ larity of such a Proceeding on the Part of Spain,
 “ not only still in Amity with Great-Britain, (tho'
 “ Discussions of Difficulty unluckily engage the
 “ two Courts) but whose Intercourse has hitherto
 “ professed itself to be friendly, and whose de-
 “ clared Aims have all along seemed to point to
 “ an amicable Adjustment of the long-subsisting
 “ Disputes relating to the Coasts of Honduras,

“ &c. by some equitable Regulation of the Enjoyment of the Privilege of cutting Logwood, by the Subjects of Great-Britain ; you will further express with the utmost Seriousness to Monsieur Wall, that nothing can equal the King’s Surprise and Regret, at a Transaction so unprecedented ; except his Majesty’s steady Purpose, and immoveable Determination, not to be diverted by any Considerations, from that even Tenor of Conduct towards Spain, which his just and constant Care of his People dictates, and which his Royal Wisdom and Magnanimity have hitherto pursued.

“ On the one hand then, his Majesty will by no means add Facilities for the Satisfaction of that Court, in consideration of any Intimation, on the Part of an hostile Power, of Union of Councils, or of present or future Conjunctions ; nor, on the other hand, will his Majesty’s Equity and Moderation cease to dispose his Royal Mind to the same reasonable Terms of Accommodation with Spain, with regard to such Objects, and in such manner, as the King, excited by Inclination and determined by System, has thro’ the Course of this Negotiation, invariably declared himself ready to embrace.”

Another Part of the same Dispatch plainly implies, that the most important Point in Dispute between us and the Court of Madrid, was at this very critical Period far from being in a hopeless

Condition, " with regard to Disputes relative to
 " the Logwood Coasts, the King will still receive
 " with Pleasure, agreeable to his Majesty's repeated
 " Declarations to the Court of Spain, any just
 " Overtures on the Part of his Catholic Majesty
 " (provided they be not conveyed through the
 " Channel of France, by whose Intervention the
 " King will never treat of these Disputes) for ami-
 " cably adjusting the same, and for removing effec-
 " tually every Source of reasonable Complaint or
 " Dispute on this Head, by terminating to mu-
 " tual Satisfaction all Things relating thereto by a
 " candid and equitable Regulation."

But the Conclusion of this Letter is so very clear
 and explicit, that it ought to be by no means o-
 mitted. " I must not however conceal from your
 " Excellency, that it is thought possible here that
 " the Court of France, tho' not wholly unauthorised,
 " may with her usual Artifice in Negociation, have
 " put much Exaggeration into this Matter ; and in
 " case, upon entering into Remonstrance on this
 " Affair, you shall perceive a Disposition in Mon-
 " sieur Wall to explain away, and disavow the Au-
 " thorization of Spain to this offensive Transac-
 " tion of France, and to come to categorical
 " and satisfactory Declarations relatively to the
 " final Intentions of Spain, your Excellency will,
 " with Readiness and your usual Address, adapt
 " yourself to so desirable a Circumstance, and will
 " open to the Court of Madrid as handsome a

" Retreat

“ Retreat as may be, in case you perceive from the
 “ Spanish Minister that they sincerely wish to find
 “ one, and to remove by an effectual Satisfaction,
 “ the unfavourable Impressions which this Memo-
 “ rial of the Court of France has justly and una-
 “ voidably made on the Mind of his Majesty.”

Could there be any thing more apparently contrary to this Dispatch, and at the same time more repugnant to these Instructions of the 28th of July, than the Proposition of the 18th of September? Could there be more absolute Inconsistency, as well as more manifest Injustice, or more evident Indecency, than in directing his Majesty's Ambassador, while acting under these Orders, and making such strong Declarations of friendly and pacific Intentions, to deliver, without any new Cause assigned, an hostile Declaration, and to quit the Court of Madrid without taking Leave?

If any thing can put this still in a stronger Point of Light, it must be done from the following Passage in his Excellency the Earl of Bristol's Letter, dated Segovia, September the 14th, 1761. “ The Spanish Minister likewise informed me of his having heard, that several additional Works were going forward in order to strengthen the Fortifications at Gibraltar, which he said would naturally confirm the Report, too universally spread, of an approaching Rupture between our Courts. His Excellency asked me, whether Great-Britain could seriously entertain any Apprehensions of

" such an Event? And, without giving me Time
" to answer, added, that the CATHOLIC KING *had*
" *at no Time been more intent on cultivating a good*
" *Correspondence with his Majesty, than at present.*"

This is so decisive, with respect to the Sentiments of the Spanish Minister at this Time, and the Sense our Ambassador had of those Sentiments, that to add any farther Arguments, in support of the Wisdom and Justice of declining so extraordinary a Proposition, Things so standing as they did, and his Majesty's Servants acting from the Lights they then had, that it would only weaken, what has been already advanced. The whole Current of the Proceedings between the two Courts, the Declarations of both Monarchs, the Sentiments of their Ministers, the nearer Approach to the amicable Determination, of at least the principal Point in Dispute, are now before the Eyes of the Public, who will be from thence able to distinguish, whether in such a Situation, it was advisable to rush wilfully and precipitately upon a new War, which could not but increase the Difficulties in carrying on that, in which we were already engaged, or by a temperate and moderate Conduct, either to avoid it, or to have indisputably Justice on our Side, when War should become inevitable, in spite of all these equitable and laudable Endeavours.

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P O S T S C R I P T.

THE Public has seen the Observations of those, who have considered these Papers relative to the Rupture with Spain, in a very different Point of Light. The Sum of those Observations amounts to this, that these Papers fully prove, there were just Grounds for declaring War against Spain, when the Lord Privy Seal and the Secretary of State proposed that Measure; and that inexpressible Advantages, have been irretrievably lost, in consequence of that Measure not being then pursued.

In respect to the first, the foregoing Pages contain a few, of the many Arguments, that have induced others, to be of a quite contrary Opinion; and the Public, must judge, with respect to their Weight. But putting these, and all other Reasons entirely out of the Question, and supposing for once, what if not supposed, perhaps can never be proved, this first Proposition to be fully established; what then? why then the second immediately takes place, that inexpressible Advantages, have been irretrievably lost; because an Autumnal War last Year, was not made against Spain, and why? The Answer is short and decisive, because Spain was then utterly unprepared, and we were in the best Condition possible, for taking the Benefit of her defenceless Situation.

The

The calm and candid Reader, is desired to consider, whether this last Proposition, does not more effectually destroy and disprove the first, than all other Reasons that can be brought against it? If Spain, as well as France, was insincere; if she had entered into secret and hostile Engagements, previous to the Negociation conducted by M. de Busly; and if Spain had all along such hostile Intentions, for the concealing of which, that Negociation was in reality, no more than a political Amusement; and when the Memorial presented by Mr. de Buffy, and consented to by Spain, was pregnant with Reasons, that would have justified an immediate Rupture, was Spain in a weak, unprovided, and defenceless Condition?

The Spaniards, may be arrogant, unreasonable, or insincere; but they never were thought downright Fools, which they certainly must have been, if they had given glaring Marks of their hostile Intentions against Great-Britain, not only without being in a Condition to commence Hostilities, but even when they were in no Condition to defend themselves.

If such really was their Condition, we can hardly believe, that the Memorial to which they consented, however imprudent, irregular, and improper, had a hostile Intention, and was designed to insult us; more especially, when this is clearly and peremptorily denied, by the Spaniards themselves, and when an able Statesman condescended to think, that this

this might not be their Intention; but that the Court of France, with her usual Artifice in Negotiation, might have put much Exaggeration into the Matter.

But if this Assertion be false, and the Spaniards were not in so weak a Condition, and we had no such clear Superiority of Power, or such an evident Opportunity of exerting it, to their Detriment and our own Advantage; then this Charge against the present Administration, of having let slip irretrievably, the Benefits that must or would have resulted from this Autumnal Campaign, falls to the Ground.

But my Lord Bristol's Letters are quoted, to prove that the Spaniards were actually arming, and taking Measures to send Ships, Troops, and Military Stores to America. All this is very true: But then it was posterior, not previous, to the Memorial presented by Mr. de Busly; and therefore these Preparations, were not so properly Evidences of their hostile Intentions against us, as of their Apprehensions, that we had hostile Intentions against them; and corresponds very well, with the Declarations made by Mr. Wall to his Lordship. We were indeed alarmed with a Report of Preparations of the like Nature, much earlier; but, upon a proper Enquiry, those Reports at that Time, were found to be without Foundation.

However it appears, that Spain in the mean time, received the Wealth that she expected from her Indies; and this by the Autumnal Campaign, might have been intercepted. Possibly it might, and probably

bably it might not ; for the Seas are wide, and there is a great Difference between meaning to make Captures, and actually making them. If we compare Dates, and allow for the Incertainty of Orders reaching our Ships, in the Mediterranean ; and those Ships taking the Measures necessary, for such a Capture, this will not appear to have been a Measure so sure, as to justify the not taking it, to be an irreparable Omission.

But even supposing this ; was the whole Wealth that Spain received, a Sum in any degree adequate to the risquing the Reputation of the Nation, when the Majority of his Majesty's Council, were in Opinion against the Justice of such a Measure ? Or was there no Advantage gained, by this Delay, in the raising our Supplies, for so many, so important, and such indispensible Services, before a War with Spain appeared to be unavoidable ? Must we censure an Administration for irreparable Losses, when in fact the Captures supposed to be in their Power, depended upon a Multitude of Contingencies ; and in making this Censure, must we also overlook the real Advantages, that were the indubitable Consequences, of the Measures they actually pursued ? Is this a just an equal and reasonable Method of proceeding ; and could any Administration be innocent, if such vague Assertions by their Opponents, were allowed Evidence sufficient to prove them guilty ?

Let every impartial and disinterested Person, candidly weigh, what has been urged on both Sides.

Let him distinguish between the Facts, which from those authentic Papers, appear to be certain ; the Colours that have been given to them, and the Consequences that have been drawn from thence. Let him pay a just Regard to Arguments, on either Side, without being biassed by Declamation. Let him remember, that every Man, of what Rank soever, and in what Station soever, who is under the sacred Tie of an Oath, to give his Opinion upon any Matter, is thereby bound to give what is really his Opinion ; and that his Conscience is not to be governed, because it cannot be discharged, by the high Sentiments that other Men may have, of the Superiority of their own Understandings. Let him reflect, on the wide Difference between even strong Suspicions, and apparent Proofs ; between the Insinuation of Evidence, and Evidence produced ; and between Assertions supported by Vehemence, and yet destitute either of conclusive Arguments, or of positive Proofs ; and then let him decide, upon these Questions, as he would wish to have them decided upon, if he was a Party in the Dispute, and had his Honour, his Loyalty, and his Peace of Mind, depending on that Decision.

From Judges in this Disposition, honest and well-meaning Men, can have nothing to fear. On the contrary, they may reasonably hope, that a Desire as Things then stood, of avoiding a War if it had been possible, was a Desire perfectly consistent with their Duty ; and that the Affairs of this Nation,

can never be in safer Hands, than when in the Hands of those, who wish to be satisfied of the Justice of a War, before they engage their Country in it ; and never put the Probability of Success into the Balance, when they are weighing the Arguments, by which that important Question, is to be determined.

F I N I S.